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AUTHOR O'Keefe, Joseph M.
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ABSTRACT

Given the advent of new forms of schooling in American education, specifically, integrated social-service schools (ISS), a radical rethinking of traditional leadership models is needed. This paper suggests a new role for K-12 public school leaders--that of the school president. Data were derived from a review of the job descriptions of the presidency in 40 Jesuit college-preparatory high schools nationwide. Findings indicate that a congruence exists between the job descriptions and the emerging needs of public ISS schools. Leaders of ISS schools must perform chief-executive officer (CEO) functions, procure and distribute resources, hold together policy and praxis in a complex structure, communicate effectively to a variety of stakeholders, coordinate a wide range of professionals, and promote external relations. Given the triple task of teaching, research, and service, the university is the most appropriate place in which to explore models of leadership for ISS schools and to prepare prospective and current practitioners for the role. Contains 56 references. (LMI)

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New Leadership for a New Initiative: Presidents of Public Schools

Joseph M. O'Keefe
Boston College

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INTRODUCTION

In light of broad radical change in theories of administration and the demands of schools, I put forth in this paper a new role in pre-K through 12 educational administration, the Presidency. Specifically, the advent of a new structure in U.S. education -- integrated social-service schools [ISS] that provide children with holistic, proactive care from a range of agencies -- prompts radical rethinking of traditional models of leadership.

Theories of administration and leadership call for change. The positivistic theoretical foundation of the modern age has given way to a post-modern paradigm that recognizes the central place of self and of context. The reigning constructivist philosophy of education fosters local reform, not conformity. Ethics plays a key role here. Along with the conventional focus on ethical administrators comes a new demand for administrators of ethical institutions. Instead of perpetuating ossified and outmoded arrangements, ethical administrators must understand the institutional context in order to create structures based on the pressing needs of children today. Implementation requires highly developed skills of analysis; structural design and coordination; alliance-building; mustering of resources; and rhetoric, the ability to be a broadly knowledgeable and articulate public person. These idiosyncratic and particularistic traits do not figure prominently in the traditional model of the principalship. New schools without new leadership are doomed; new wine requires new wine bottles.

Empirical analysis offers an appropriate direction for change. Because new leadership models for ISS schools are yet untested, educators must look to analogues in other contexts. In this study I examined the job descriptions of the presidency in 40 private schools nation-wide. I found remarkable congruence between what is described there and the emerging needs of public ISS schools. Given its triple task of research, teaching and service, the university is the most appropriate place to investigate the feasibility of the public-school presidency and then to prepare prospective and current practitioners to take on the task.

A THEORETICAL RATIONALE FOR THE PUBLIC-SCHOOL PRESIDENCY

For several years, the entire field of educational administration has been under intense scrutiny (Murphy 1992, Anson, 1992). Post-modern epistemology has given birth to new constructivist ways of understanding

leadership (Conger 1989; Bolman and Deal, 1991; Manasse, 1991; Tucker-Ladd *et al*, 1992). Reform is radical, with the advent of new conceptual paradigms (Boyd, 1991). Reform is also interpersonal; hierarchical and authoritarian models have given way to democratic modes of governance (Barth, 1991). Bold leadership is the order of the day. Rost explains: "Although these are times of great uncertainty and upheaval, they are also times ripe for special kinds of leader. By 'special' I am referring to leaders who are masters of change, who can inspire us to take risks, and who possess a keen sense of strategic opportunity" (Rost, 1991, p. 8). If one examines the emerging literature on school leadership, "special" means "ethical" (Strike *et al*, 1988; Purpel, 1989; Barnett *et al*, 1991; Hodgkinson, 1991; Maxcy, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1992; Marshall, 1992; Capper, 1993; Starratt, 1994; Beck, 1994). Because context is key, ethical leadership demands a careful reading of the signs of the times For many U.S. children today, especially in the inner-city, the signs are ominous.

In 1980, 16% of all children lived below the poverty line. By 1990 that figure increased to 18.3%. In 1992, it reached over 22% and it continues to grow (Population Reference Bureau, 1992, p. 6, p. 46). Over 100,000 of the children living in poverty are homeless; inadequate housing and health care places the nation's children well below their counterparts in other industrialized nations (Children's Defense Fund, 1991; Hewlett, 1991). Certain populations are especially hard hit; nearly 40% of African-American children, 38.8% of Native-Americans, 32.2% of Hispanic-Americans, 17.1% of Asian-Americans and 12.5% of White children live in poverty (Population Reference Bureau, p. 6). In the future, a growing percentage of the poor will be children of color. Alhburg and DeVita (1992) claim that "...by the year 2000, one in three children will be from a minority population, compared with about one in four today. Child poverty rates, however, are two to three times higher for minority children that of non-Hispanic whites." (p. 5) Though legal discrimination against ethnic minorities no longer exists, disparities in educational attainment, housing options, health and mortality remain (Massey and Denton, 1993). Geographic segregation continues also --86% of minorities live in urban areas (O'Hare, 1992, p. 23). Twenty-five years ago the Kerner Commission warned that, unless drastic steps were taken, the United States would become "two nations, separate and unequal; one black, one white; one rich, one poor; one urban, one suburban." In his recent study of

African-Americans, social scientist Andrew Hacker (1992) posits that the prophecy of the late 1960's has been realized. Schools generally reflect these inequalities (Kozol, 1991; Orfield, 1993).

Students, not structure, must be the principle of reform (Sarason, 1991). Concomitantly, there must be a shift in focus from ethical administrators to administrators of ethical institutions: "Administrators must practice the ethic of caring through all their interpersonal interactions and in building a nurturing school culture that consistently demonstrates what the people in the school care about: cooperation, teamwork, friendship, inclusion" (Capper, 1993, p. 273). The logic of ethics leads to the undeniable fact that schools need radical restructuring; values are vapid if they are not effectively institutionalized (Beck, 1994, p. 82). The task is not easy. Personal defensive routines perpetuate the *status quo* (Argyris, 1993) and institutional dynamics make change daunting:

> Even when enough moral conviction can be summoned to press for well-thought-out change, these institutions always find change difficult and accept it slowly. In a factory, a new technological development can bring sudden and useful change. Not so with institutions that affect human beings. Attempts to change institutions that in turn must change the behavior or attitudes of human beings run into traditions, emotions, and loyalties that are very powerful in preserving the status quo (Howe, 1993, p. 51).

Good intentions only go so far. Without technical expertise, political savvy, imagination, self-confidence, human and material resources, and lots of time, change is unlikely. Herman & Herman (1994) explain what is needed:

> transformational change -- the only rational choice to be made when a school or school district is working poorly, or when outside or inside forces are demanding radical changes in the way instructional, support services, or governance matters are being conducted. Transformational change is dramatic in structure and rapid in transition and it will ultimately radically change the entire culture of the organization" (p.3).

The call for radical change is not new. In 1991 Schlectly wrote that "reformers are attempting to accommodate to demographic shifts by developing new models of the educational enterprise -- schools for the twenty-first century -- and new types of leaders to manage these institutions"

(pp. 93-95). Schools must be less factory-like and more family-like. Jane Roland Martin (1992) wants schools to function as homes. Wehlage (1993) echoes Coleman's analysis of successful schools as those that foster social capital, the variety of bonds among people that build community and a sense of belonging (1990). Large, impersonal institutions do not work for students (Hill, 1991). Decentralized schools must replace bulky, bureaucratic systems (Brown 1991; Glanz, 1991). In the preface of their recent book Steffy and Lindle (1994, p. x) write: "We can think of no more important task before us than to ensure the efficacy of the nation's public schools and to engage in and to resolve the issue of quality. But, as we make clear in this book, it cannot be done alone! Schools must have partners to be successful." Principals of site-based managed schools can bring to bear an enormous array of community partners to serve children well. They must function as social architects who "...give voice to the moral imperative to address historically nonschooling issues" (Beck & Murphy, 1993, p. 192). External relations are primary.

> With more permeable boundaries between the dynamic school and the environment, the principal deals with more and different groups of parents, business representatives, and community agencies. The principal is usually the first contact point with the external environment but will most likely spend more energy with these constituencies than traditional principals who focus most of their efforts internally (Goldring & Rallis, 1993, p. 141).

Generally speaking, the number of stakeholders in the planning and implementation processes has expanded greatly; the principal has gone from being "campus administrator to integrator of school and community services" (Miller, 1994, p. 11).

Precedents of principal-related, inter-institutional collaboration exist. Six years ago, "at least 42 states (had) appointed task forces to study ways to build partnerships between businesses and schools" (American Association of School Administrators, 1988). In 1991 Hoyle recognized public relations as a central task of the principalship. In 1993 Thomson placed political leadership, community/business leadership, social service and financial leadership high on the list of qualifications. Finally, school-university links have forced principals to move from being myopic managers to "boundary spanners" (Lieberman, 1992, p. 154). Such partnerships require "tremendous output." Time is a key factor -- "there is no mix and stir"; collegiality is often painful;

founding and maintaining a core group is problematic; articulating a mission takes well-honed skill; creating innovative and flexible structures is complex and facilitating group processes difficult (Russell & Flynn, 1992).

While precedents of inter-institutional collaboration exist, complexity is magnified in ISS schools. Caccamo & Levitt (1994) list some of the needs of families that school leaders must address: 1. Identifying and accessing social services; 2. Adult parenting information; 3. Literacy education; 4. Preschool and after-school care; 5. Services for low-income families and children with special needs; 6. Health-care programs; 7. Higher order thinking skills; 8. functional illiteracy. An example from the field is illustrative. The principal of an inner-city Chicago school cleans up neighborhoods, meets with local school councils, acts as a liaison between neighborhood people and police, spearheads neighborhood revitalization, has converted an abandoned lot into a playground, works closely with the local boys club, has opened the school on Saturday in order to create better relations between kids from different neighborhoods, sponsors Saturday morning neighborhood field trips to museums and zoos in an effort to build community, sponsors summer community service projects, works with the Latino Youth agency and the local church, and started a "Don't Move During the School Year" program to reduce the transiency rate of school families, and secures funding for all of the above (Prager, 1993).

The public expects schools to do more with fewer resources, less time, and higher demands. Social problems "have divided the attention of administrators as more and more professional agencies call on schools to address problems like drugs, teen pregnancy, abuse, crime, etc." (Beck, 1994, p. 66). A recent study released by the Committee for Economic Development, an organization of executives at 250 large organizations, claimed that "communities, states and the national government are asking those who manage our classrooms to be parent, social worker, doctor, psychologist, police officer and perhaps, if there is time, teacher" (Manegold, 1994). What applies to teachers applies *a fortiori* to principals.

In a recent study Dryfoos (1994) warns that high administrative turnover threatens fledgling ISS schools. While some would argue that proper training can lighten the burden inter-institutional collaboration places on principals (Forsyth and Tallerico, 1993, p. 202), others see a set-up for failure. One person cannot be both principal and chief executive officer of an

ISS school. When new wine is put into an old bottle, the bottle cracks. It is presidents, not principals, who can provide new leadership for new schools.

AN EMPIRICAL RATIONALE FOR THE PUBLIC-SCHOOL PRESIDENCY

The job requirements of the contemporary leader of the ISS school do not match the job description of a principal. Many elements of the presidency on the higher-education level are germane. One study described the president's primary work as "representing the institution to external constituencies and manifesting a capacity to lead in the communities which lie beyond the institution." Beyond is the operative word. Among the key result areas are external relations, fund development, community outreach, relations with the news media and building enrollment through a strong public presence in the community (McPhail, 1988, pp. 2-12). Another study indicates that nearly one-quarter of the president's time is spent outside of the institution (Williams, 1991).

Since the structure, tradition and developmental needs of students in higher education differs considerably from the pre-K through 12, it is especially important to investigate the presidency at the secondary level. While there are headmasters in many private schools, they tend to be responsible for the direct oversight of the entire operation, including curriculum and instruction. A small but growing number of private schools, most of them Catholic, have presidents and principals. Examination of the president's job description in 40 Jesuit high schools reveals remarkable congruence with the administrative demands of ISS schools.

From coast to coast, forty-six Jesuit college-preparatory high schools currently enroll 37,000 students. Until the late 1960s the schools were owned and operated almost exclusively by Jesuits, a religious order of Roman Catholic priests and brothers formally called the Society of Jesus. In the 1960s the schools underwent separate incorporation and are now owned by self-perpetuating boards of trustees. While the influence of the Jesuit order on board policy varies from school to school, there is a rapid movement toward lay control. Though at the moment all presidents are Jesuits, it is widely believed that U.S. schools will soon appoint lay presidents, following the pattern of a number of sister institutions world-wide.

In this document analysis, I first examine and enumerate explicit roles. I then examine the language of the texts, focusing on the operative verbs.

Finally, I describe a very recent working paper that looks to the future. Each school has developed its own job description for the president and while there is a noticeable lack of uniformity in the 40 documents, some common themes do emerge.

Out of the forty descriptions, 36 explicitly mention that the president is the chief executive officer [CEO]. It can be assumed that the role is implicit in the others. In 32 descriptions, budgetary responsibility is explicit; in 31 fundraising; in 30 financial management; in 25 public relations; in 22 the management of property; in 21 the hiring of the administration; in 20 supervision of the administration; in 16 management of salary and benefits, reporting to the board and ultimate academic oversight. In 15 schools, the president communicates the school's philosophy to all constituents and provides religious leadership; in 14 he preserves the Jesuit nature of the school; in 13 he undertakes long-range planning and the hiring and firing of staff; 12 times endowment management and handling legal affairs is an explicit responsibility. In 10 schools the president coordinates the administration; in another 10 he articulates the school vision; in yet another 10 the president is the liaison to the local community. Scattered throughout the descriptions are other responsibilities: capital expenditures, setting tuition, expelling students, approving tenure, connecting the school to the Jesuit community; being the board's liaison to various school constituencies; cultivating special gifts; recruiting support from all constituents; directing financial aid; providing inspiration; preserving unity; determining admissions and recruitment policy; marketing; fostering diversity; and enriching the lives of adults.

A study of the verbs found in job description reveals what the president actually does. The most prevalent verbs concern communication: "address, articulate, communicate, project an image, is spokesman, reports, shares the vision with various publics, is responsible for public relations." Second, it is explicitly mentioned twenty-five times that the President "represents" the school "...at conferences; ...with organizations and in appropriate community matters; ...in the community and the various publics associated with the school; ...in the broader community by participating in community events and service organizations; ...within the civic, religious and academic communities; ...at all public functions; ...at educational organizations and agencies and in appropriate community matters; ...at local,

regional, national education meetings, conferences and institutes; ...within civic, religious and academic communities, whether locally or nationally." The President also coordinates all affiliated groups; cultivates prospects for fund-raising; delegates responsibility for development; develops an in-depth understanding of the local community in terms of its religious and socioeconomic composition; encourages and promotes interest of alumni, parents, and friends; engages in public service to other educational institutions and public and private nonprofit charitable institutions; engages continued interest in and financial support for the school from alumni and the community at large; insures that an accurate image of the school is portrayed; maintains contact with the community at large as well as other educators and relevant professional organizations so that the school benefits from new ideas and information; makes the need of the school known to the parents, the alumni, and to the larger civic and school community; moderates parents' clubs and alumni organizations; plans and supervises implementation of appropriate programs for income development with alumni, corporations and foundations, parents and other friends of the school; projects a positive image in the community through participation in civic and charitable activities; provides effective liaison between the school and neighborhood groups; provides opportunities for adequate adult and family programs of information and enrichment; is the public persona of the school for purposes of proclaiming its mission; reinforces the trust of alumni and parents; recruits and assigns volunteers, cultivates and solicits donors; reports the school's progress to the entire school community; serves as chief spokesman for and interpreter of the corporation to its constituencies and takes leadership in obtaining the support of the corporation from all sources; works with all volunteer parent groups and attends all parent meetings; works with parents of the students and other elements of the local community to promote participation in the greater community.

In a recent self-study conducted by the Jesuit Secondary Education Association (Hotz, 1994), six tasks emerge as central. First, the president is a long-range visionary who mediates "policy and praxis" as the voice of conscience in the institution: "In the midst of daily tensions within a school, the President strives to review all aspects of the institution in light of the questions rooted in its mission: 'Who are we?' 'What are we about?' 'Who do we want to be?' and 'What will it take to become that?' The questions cut

through the management crises that too often create a "tyranny of the immediate" for leaders. Second, the president brings diverse people together: "While all complex institutions require a division of labor and responsibility, the challenge of the coordination and collaboration of these various efforts and responsibilities emerges as a fundamental task." Third, the president is responsible for the external environment of the institution. He maintains relationships with "...various stakeholders, most outside of the daily confines of the school. Over time the president learns what the stakeholder experiences as *valuable* in the institution and works with the stakeholder to relate that value to the mission of the institution. Fourth, the president, in the role of chief executive officer, "coordinates the acquisition and allocation of human material, financial and informational resources necessary to support further the mission." Fifth, he allocates resources in light of "regular evaluation of the needs of the institution and its stakeholders in light of a deepening understanding and appropriation of the institution's mission." Sixth, the president does not lead in isolation. He "...collaborates with others on the leadership team to complement and complete his or her own strengths."

The president must, like all good leaders, use different lenses and frames to understand and guide a complex institution. The document states:

> In certain times and among different stakeholders, the president needs to be an organizational **strategist** who leads through analysis and design, a **servant** who leads through supporting and empowering others, a **politician** who leads through the building of alliances, or a **prophet** who leads through inspiration.

Certainly, no person exercises all the skills whenever necessary. The document goes on: "In order to invite, enable, and hold accountable those who, according to their own gifts and contributions, participate in the mission," the President with a cabinet, will " lead those who make up the school community into the meaning and power of Jesuit education."

New presidents, in concert with a cabinet, should lead those who make up the school community into the meaning and power of an "Integrated Social Service School. The Jesuit model is applicable to ISS schools for five reasons. First, the head of an ISS school must function as a CEO with broad oversight and powers of delegation. Without site-based management the leader will not be able to provide both internal cohesiveness and external

relations. The superintendent and other central-office adminsitrators should have two roles: hiring and evaluating the president; and supporting the effort through funding, technical assistance and cutting bureaucratic red tape in the school district and with other governmental agencies. Second, the leader of an ISS school has the daunting task of procuring and distributing resources. The demands of financial development and administration of a large, complex budget for a wide array of professional services is far beyond the scope of a principal. Third, ethical institutions require someone who remembers the vision and can hold together policy and praxis in a complex, exploratory structure. The newness of ISS schools will inevitably lead to confusion and mistakes; the leader needs the time and space to remain recollected and thus stave off the tyranny of the immediate. Fourth, without communication, vision is vapid. The leader must be able to communicate through speech and through physical presence to a wide variety of stakeholders. Fifth, rather than exercising internal control, the leader must coordinate the efforts of a broad range of professionals in a spirit of collegiality and mutual respect. The ISS school leader is not a former teacher leading teachers in curriculum and instruction; rather he or she is a broadly knowledgeable presider. Sixth, external relations is the key to success of ISS schools. Presidents, not principals, are best equipped to undertake the task.

Jesuit schools are an imperfect analogue for ISS schools. They are voluntary religious institutions that prepare educationally successful children from middle-class families for college. As religious institutions they have a rich resource of symbols that express an inspirational ideology. With the decline of influence of the founding religious order, the institutions are independent; there is no superintendent, no central office. Finally, these schools are fairly affluent, traditional academic institutions. Integrated Social-Service schools are public schools that generally serve younger children from low-income families. Unlike Jesuit presidents, ISS presidents will spend enormous time and energy procuring and administering grants from government and the private sector. Finally, the service provided by ISS schools is not merely academic. They bring together aspects of society reminiscent of the federal cabinet of yesteryear. ISS schools are departments of health, education and welfare.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNIVERSITY

The university is the only structure that brings under one administrative and fiscal umbrella health, education and welfare professionals. Moreover, no other institution provides professionals with the luxury of time to explore, discuss and evaluate new and innovative entities. Given its triple mandate of research, teaching and service, the university is a privileged forum to explore models of leadership for ISS schools.

Universities can bring to term this and other embryonic efforts to explore and develop new models of leadership for ISS schools. For example, independent schools, schools of choice, charter schools and collaboratives offer alternative (non-principal) models of preK-12 leadership. These provide a rich field of documents to be analyzed. In addition, universities can sponsor more significant, multifaceted inquiry into the presidency through survey instruments, interviews and observation. Close and careful scrutiny of principals in existing ISS schools will provide an indispensable view from the field. Researchers need to learn from principals in exemplary ISS schools, superintendents in districts where there are exemplary ISS schools, and others professionals in health, education and welfare. On the one hand, research will uncover helpful analogues so that leadership models need not emerge *ex nihilo*. On the other hand, research will provide a solid footing for the creation of new structures.

Teaching is a central task of the university. Changes in Educational Administration curriculum are obvious: courses in social services, counseling psychology, health-care systems, grant procurement, financial management, rhetoric, negotiation, politics, etc. Instruction too must change. Educational Administration faculty must develop an appropriate pedagogy for adults that includes field-based learning, group learning, problem-based learning, flexibility of requirements and inter-disciplinary team teaching. Since experienced adult students function as texts for each other, university faculty must insure multi-disciplinary enrollment in core courses. Prospective and practicing social workers, nurses, psychologists, teachers, lawyers and adminsitrators need to spend focused time together.

Boston College has moved toward these goals. Project InServ, funded by a $268,000 three-year FIPSE grant from the U.S. Department of Education will:

> ...revise teacher preparation programs at Boston College to prepare future teachers to serve the physical, social, and emotional needs of children. The teacher preparation program will collaborate with selected Boston Public Schools and with professional preparation programs in psychology, social work, nursing, and law at Boston College to articulate new pedagogies, to assist future teachers in identifying, addressing, and preventing the complex problems of today's children, to build interprofessional instructional teams in teacher preparation coursework and field supervision, and to establish interprofessional instructional teams of students who will engage in field work/practicum experiences in schools

Boston College also received from the U.S. Department of Education scholarship funds for doctoral students through the Patricia Roberts Harris Program. The fellows, students of psychology, curriculum and instruction, and administration, meet regularly to evaluate and plan Boston College's efforts in integrated social services. Finally, DeWitt-Wallace granted Boston College $100,000 over two years as part of the National Center for Social Work and Education Collaboration based at Fordham University. The centerpiece is a joint field project in which interns from social work and student teachers from education will be paired and placed in selected public-school sites. A second major component is a core course for all social-work and education students on integrating social services and education. Eight students (four pairs) will participate in the project for a total of 16 students over the two years. While these projects are laudable, much remains to be done for prospective and practicing administrators. In light of the recertification and professional-development clauses of the Massachusetts Educational Reform Act of 1993, the university must include practicing administrators in these efforts.

Service is the third defining task of a university. As is the case generally, the one providing service gains as much as, or more than, the one receiving service. Efforts on behalf of the ISS schools benefit not only the children served by reformed and restructured schools but also the university itself. In place of a multiversity of competing and balkanized departments, ISS efforts operationalize in a new and significant way the term "university"; they bring together disparate disciplines, interests and traditions in the seeking of the common good. This is an era in which the American

university is searching for its soul (Marsden, 1994). The renewal of school leaders for the benefit of the nation's underserved children is an ideal place to start the search.

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